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Review: Seneca: Moral Epistles

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the word) leads him to concentrate on the plays as texts to the virtual exclusion of "performance". Goldhill acknowledges the importance of performance, comments interestingly in places on theatrical effects, and in the last chapter raises some formidable objections to the practice of "stagecraft" criticism. Goldhill does remark that performance "is a process of interpreting the text and opening the text to the interpretation of an audience." Wider application of this idea might have opened up further areas of interest. Both the possibilities and the limits of a purely rhetorical reading may be observed in the discussion of the "deception speech" in the *Ajax* (Chapter 7).

Nevertheless, Goldhill has produced a powerful reading of Greek tragedy as a genre and of attempts to interpret it. I warmly recommend this book to anyone seriously interested in tragedy.

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WILLIAM G. THALMANN

Anna Lydia Motto (ed.). *Seneca: Moral Epistles*. American Philological Association Textbook Series, 8. Chico (CA): Scholars Press, 1985. Pp. 362. \$27.50 (hb.) (member \$23.00), \$15.95 (pb.) (member \$14.00). ISBN 0-8913-0558-0; 0-8913-0897-0.

Here is a handy selection of forty of Seneca's most important *Epistulae Morales* presented in an attractive format with running and end vocabularies, notes, and a brief introduction to the author's life, thought, and style. Designed as "a rapid reader", the volume is geared toward the college student and provides a well chosen sampling of letters illuminating Senecan epistolary technique, late Roman Stoicism, and the social history of the Neronian age. The book is very different in tone and purpose from Summers' edition of 1910 and does not mean to provide a commentary of either depth or sophistication. One will have to look elsewhere for discussions of problems or for compendia of parallels to other authors. This is a reading text designed to enable a student to get through the maximum amount of Senecan prose with a minimum of expenditure of effort on matters lexical or philological. This end is served quite admirably by the format which reproduces Reynolds' *OCT* text, with notes beneath, and a complete facing vocabulary—all presented in a refreshingly uncramped lay-out. The notes, in accord with the goal of rapid reading, tend to be short and limit themselves to points of grammar, technical matters, and identifications of proper names. In general, this minimalist commentary suits the purposes of the volume quite well, except in Epistle 114, where Seneca adduces a number of quotations from Maecenas as examples of the author's dissolute writing style. These fragments, whose abstruseness and *preciosité* have puzzled many a commentator and editor, will be utterly opaque in this text, as neither the vocabulary nor the notes address the inherent difficulties. This omission could have been easily remedied by a look at R. Avallone's brilliant explication of the fragments in his *Mecenae* (Naples 1963).

Such criticism, however, is minor. On the whole, the volume does deliver what it promises and gives accessibility to an important but sometimes difficult author. The project is also very timely, as Neronian literature in general and Seneca in particular have in recent years generated a burst of

scholarly activity. It is good to see the benefits of this activity filtering into the undergraduate Latin curriculum.

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Paul Moraux. *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen, II. Peripatoi*, 6. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1984. Pp. xxx, 825. DM 468 (approx. \$213.20). ISBN 3-1100-4361-0.

This second of three volumes on the Aristotelian tradition planned by the author before his recent death (I have not learned what the fate of the third volume will be) is in two parts. Book I surveys texts more or less directly in the tradition. Moraux begins with the *Peri kosmou* and the fragments of Aristotle's *Peri philosophias* preserved by Eusebius, and goes on to treat the major Aristotelian commentators (known chiefly only through later citations) of the first and second centuries A.D., above all Aspasius, Adrastus of Aphrodisias, and three teachers of the great commentator, Alexander of Aphrodisias. Book II covers Aristotelian doctrines recorded elsewhere, for example in the anonymous commentary on the *Theaetetus* that survives on papyrus, and in other Platonizing sources, in the Stoics Athenodorus and Cornutus, in neo-Pythagorean writings, and in Galen, who receives over 100 pages of discussion. Vastness of scale, immense learning and documentation, and the clarity of the narrative make this volume, like its predecessor, an indispensable reference work for anyone concerned with the main sources for Aristotelianism in the early Roman empire (the topic of Aristotelian influences on such writers as Plutarch and Seneca, for example, falls outside the scope of this work). Moraux's emphasis is on the history of philosophical doctrines, rather than on possible resolutions of knotty problems that arise in the text, and which might be of independent interest to modern philosophers. Where the evidence is scanty, differences among scholars will inevitably flourish. This is not the place to air them. But the commentators and critics of Aristotle were subtle folk, and their views are important both in their own right, and for the light they shed on intellectual currents and history. There is a growing interest, today, in Hellenistic and later Greek philosophy, and Moraux has done an enormous service to the field by providing us with this monumental introduction and survey. As a bonus, his book is easy to consult and (dare I say it) fun to browse in. We can all be grateful for it.

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DAVID KONSTAN

Emily Frenkel. *Aeneas: Virgil's Epic Retold for Young Readers*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1986. Pp. 178, incl. 27 b/w illustrations. \$11.00 (pb.). ISBN 0-8629-2198-8.

Frenkel's retelling of the *Aeneid* is likely to appeal to many critics and appall others. Those of the "Putnam" or "Harvard" school will probably find Frenkel's Aeneas a sugar-coated, whitewashed caricature. On the other hand, more traditional critics (e.g., those in sympathy with Otis' or Anderson's views of the epic) will generally approve of Frenkel's rendition. Being in the latter category myself, I am highly impressed on the whole with this book.